



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF HEALTH  
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## News Release

SBOH 03-02

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### **State Board of Health Meets with Thurston County Board to Discuss Local Efforts to Improve Access to Health Care**

*Wednesday, March 12, 9:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m., Lacey Community Center, 6729 Pacific Avenue SE, Lacey*

The State Board of Health (SBOH) and the Thurston County Board of Health will meet jointly on the afternoon of March 12. The two boards will hear presentations on the Thurston County Community Health Task Force and on efforts to increase access to primary medical care and dental care for Thurston County residents. These include a for-profit hospital opening a clinic to serve the uninsured, an expansion of a local community clinic, and a Salvation Army program to provide dental care using volunteer dentists. SBOH will discuss its work on access to critical health services and the Public Health Improvement Plan Access Standards.

The State Board of Health has been holding a series of meetings with local boards of health around the state to learn about local concerns and priorities. One of the frequent themes emerging from those meetings is the need to help people find and pay for health care.

The meeting takes place in conjunction with Cover the Uninsured Week, a series of national and local activities that will take place March 10 through March 16, 2003, in an effort to sensitize the public and opinion leaders to the plight of Americans who lack health insurance ([covertheuninsuredweek.org](http://covertheuninsuredweek.org)).

SBOH will also convene separately in the morning. Agenda items include a legislative update, a review of potential Board activities for 2003-05, a discussion of a proposal to create the Food Safety Review Council, and a suggested work plan to review HIV/AIDS policies, rules, and statutes.

Copies of the agenda and related materials are available by contacting the Board of Health at (360) 236-4110 or by visiting the Board's Web site at [www.doh.wa.gov/sboh/](http://www.doh.wa.gov/sboh/).

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The State Board of Health serves the citizens of Washington by working to understand and prevent disease across the entire population. Established in 1889 by the State Constitution, the Board provides leadership by suggesting public health policies and actions, by regulating certain activities, and by providing a public forum. The governor appoints ten members who fill three-year terms. Visit the board's Web site at [www.doh.wa.gov/sboh](http://www.doh.wa.gov/sboh).